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ABSTRACT

Materials for a workshop on vocational education for limited-English-proficient (LEP) students are gathered. An annotated outline presents the content and sequence of the workshop, which reviews the problems and suggests solutions to working with students who have a restricted understanding of the language of instruction. Issues addressed include instructional, cultural, and communication obstacles. Masters for the workshop agenda and a list of communication behaviors to avoid when speaking to LEP students are provided. Handout masters are included for a workshop participant questionnaire, a list of Southeast Asian social and cultural customs, communication behaviors to avoid, and an instructional task assignment to be completed in the workshop. A resource reading entitled "The New Immigrants" from San Diego State University's Institute for Leisure Behavior is appended. The reading gives an overview of the education, customs, cultural traits, and pronunciation of common names of the Vietnamese, Laotian, Hmong, and Cambodian peoples. (MSE) (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education)

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A VESL Staff Development Training Resource Packet

Helping Vocational Instructors Train Limited English Proficient Students

by

Toni D. Thomas

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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VESL Staff Development Project

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ANNOTATED OUTLINE

I. Welcome and statement of purpose (Display overhead #1 - Outline)

A. LEP people continue to come to the U.S. in large numbers.

B. They need to be trained for jobs

C. They don't have enough time (and often insufficient education) to learn English fluently before entering vocational classes.

D. Vocational instructors must learn to work as effectively as possible under these circumstances

II. Questionnaire (Distribute handout #1)

A. Purpose

1. Help the vocational instructor isolate his specific instructional and attitudinal problems

2. Provide a framework for the workshop

3. Provide more input for VESL staff to address for future workshops

B. Questionnaire Completion - Have individual participants complete questionnaire. (These can be collected at the end of the workshop but the participants should be able to refer to it during the workshop.)

C. Group work - Designate groups of 4-6 people. Each group discusses the participants' responses to the questionnaire, mutual problems and concerns about working with LEP students.

D. Feedback - one person from each group reports on the responses and discussion of his group.

III. The Problems

A. Questionnaire addresses two aspects of the problem

1. Instructional dilemma

a. How to relay the information to the student and ascertain that the student has a grasp of the subject.

b. How to get the student an appropriate job (given the preparation he has received in the vocational class)

c. Which questions address the instructional problems? (6,7,8,10)

ANNOTATED OUTLINE

2. Cultural dilemma

   a. Why do LEP students do or say things that seem odd?

   b. How do you prepare the student for the cultural aspects of working in the U.S.?

   c. Which questions address the cultural problems? (Questions 5,8,10,11)

   d. What are some examples of behavior in your class that you think are culturally related? (Examples: the student always smiles, he calls me 'teacher' no matter how often I ask him to use my name, he says he understands what to do and then does the wrong thing)

IV. The Solutions

A. Cultural awareness. How do you establish a working relationship with the LEP student?

   1. Learn about his culture; be aware of cultural differences

      a. Distribute handout #2 - Southeast Asian Social and Cultural Differences. (For further information refer to the information in the 'New Immigrants' pamphlet.)

      b. Read through the paper together. Can you think of anything that has happened in class that you can relate directly to one of these cultural traits?

      c. What are some things that have happened that you can't relate to these particular traditions?

   2. Put yourself in the student's place. Imagine yourself in his country.

   3. Think of each student as an individual.

   4. Don't expect more of him than you would an English speaker with a similar socio-economic background.

   5. Familiarize him with American customs that differ from his own

B. What can the ESL instructor do for the vocational instructor?

   1. Help establish English proficiency guide lines for admitting LEP students to vocational classes

      a. ESL instructors realize that LEP students need a certain proficiency level to cope with your class.

      b. They also realize that if the student's lack of English prevents him from getting a job after completing the vocational class, your time has been wasted.

c. They can help to develop an appropriate test to evaluate the student's readiness for your class.

2. Help the student reach the required English level

a. They can isolate students enrolled in or interested in specific vocational classes and address their specific language needs

b. They can determine (or verify your assessment) that a student is not ready for your class (help convince the student)

3. Adapt your class materials so that LEP students can work more easily with them.

a. They know what is easy and difficult language (vocabulary and grammar) for the student

b. If they are familiar with your materials, they can include more of the vocabulary and relevant grammar in the ESL class. They need to become aware of the language needs of the vocational student.

4. Help with individual language problems in your class

a. Example: A student's pronunciation is so bad that you can't understand anything. Let the ESL teacher know!

b. Suspected learning disabilities

5. The ESL instructor can visit your class. Working together will make both of your jobs easier.

C. What the vocational instructor can do for the ESL instructor?

1. Visit an ESL class. See what they do and what they try to do. Maybe you can use some of their methods in your class.

2. Tell the ESL instructor about particular language problems in your class.

a. Telling the ESL instructor that the students need more conversational English is not helpful; they already know that.

b. Telling them that the students need to learn the names of particular tools or how to ask questions if they don't understand directions, is helpful.

c. If a particular student is having trouble, the ESL teacher may have a solution.

ANNOTATED OUTLINE

c. Use simple but grammatical English. You want to help the student learn English as well as the vocation.

. Read sentence #5 as written.

a. YES/NO questions, for cultural reasons, are difficult for an Indochinese student to answer. Often he will answer according to what he thinks you want to hear, in order not to disappoint you.

b. Use content questions. This requires that the student give information as part of the answer and forces the student to repeat the instructions you have given. You can easily verify if he understands your directions.

2. Things to do

a. Repetition. Repeat the same information using similar simple vocabulary. Remember not to increase the number of words, but to use easier and fewer words.

b. Visual Support. Teach new vocational concepts using as many visuals (or better yet, the actual tools or parts) as are available at your location.

c. Body language is another means of visual support. It is easy to demonstrate many verbs using body motions. (For example: cutting, sawing, hammering, etc.)

d. Ask students to repeat instructions you have given them. Always ask content questions after giving a lecture to determine if the student has understood the lesson.

e. Peer insturction. If you have one student who is better than the others, let him translate information for the others. (Be sure that the student understands before you ask him to translate.)

3. Indirect communication (videotape, audio-visual, written materials)

a. Videotape Transcription - Refer to handout #3. This is a sample of speech from an instructional videotape reviewing machine shop safety rules which is currently in use.

. Read the passage to the participants.

. Each group make a list of the types of things that are wrong with the passage. (For example: grammatical errors, unnecessary repetition, too many words, slang, etc.)

. Discuss the problems among all participants.

3. Make your materials available to the ESL department. It will be easier for them to incorporate them into their curriculum.

4. Give the LEP student every opportunity to use his English. Your classroom provides an excellent place for the student to use his English outside of the ESL class.

D. How to Communicate with the LEP student

1. Things to Avoid (Distribute handout #3. Display overhead #2. For sentences 1-5, read the sentence as described below, ask the participants to tell what they think is wrong with it, refer to the overhead to describe what should be avoided, read the improved version of the sentence and explain why this is better to use with the LEP student.)

. Read sentence #1 in very fast, fluent speech.

a. Fast speech and more words do not simplify the idea you want to get across. We are not aware of how we say something.

b. Use few words and distinct speech. Try not to be artificial with your pronunciation. Use simple words.

. Read sentence #2 with an abnormally loud voice.

a. Loud voices can be intimidating as well as insulting to the student. He knows that he isn't deaf. If you do suspect a hearing problem., contact someone who can check his hearing

b. Use a normal tone of voice.

. Read sentence #3 as written.

a. Slang is language that is familiar to one group of speakers but not necessarily common knowledge among all speakers of the language.

b. Use words that are common to all English speakers (including idioms). It's also important to teach slang that is used in your particular vocation. (other examples: as American as apple pie, as simple as falling off a log)

. Read sentence #4 as written.

a. Pidgin is a simplified speech used for communication between people with different languages.

b. A pidgin is not grammatically correct. It does't help the student to hear incorrect English; he may begin to use it that way.

- Have each participant rewrite the passage so that it would be easier for an LEP student to understand, using 75 words or less.

- Have one person from each group read his revised passage

- Discuss of the types of changes and the advantages and disadvantages of each revision

b. Written Material (Repeat the procedures above for the sample of the written safety rules for a welding class.)

4. Putting it all together

- Instructional Task Assignment (Distribute slips of paper from handout #4)

- Participant must plan a short lesson to teach his group the task described on the slip of paper. Give the participants 10 minutes to prepare to teach the lesson, including visual aides or written material to facilitate instruction.

- The other participants in the group critigue the methods used to teach them the skill in terms of language usage.

- One person from each group reports to the other groups the successes and failures of the lessons.

5. How to use your aide effectively

a. Bilingual Aide

- Use your translator as a last resort for everyday classroom instruction and communication. Give the LEP student every opportunity to use his English.

- Do let the aide translate essential information such as safety regulations, school holidays, registration procedures, etc.

b. Monolingual aide (English-speaking aide)

- Encourage them to visit an ESL class and use some of these methods when working with the students

- Make them aware of the information you got from this workshop. Let them know what language to avoid and what to use.

- Familiarize them with the cultural differences among the LEP students

ANNOTATED OUTLINE

V. Closing Remarks

1. General summary
2. Questions and comments from participants
3. Where to get more information

VI. Workshop evaluation

OVERHEAD #1

WORKSHOP AGENDA

I. Welcome and introductions

II. Questionnaire

III. The Problems

IV. The Solutions

- A. Cultural Awareness
- B. What the ESL instructor can do for the vocational instructor
- C. What the Vocational instructor can do for the ESL teacher
- D. How to communicate with the LEP student

V. Closing remarks, questions, comments

VI. Workshop evaluation

THINGS TO AVOID WHEN SPEAKING TO LEP STUDENTS

DON'T SAY:	DESCRIPTION:	DO SAY:
1. If you don't understand what you are supposed to do, be sure to ask somebody to give you a hand.	FAST SPEECH/MORE WORDS	FEW WORDS/DISTINCT SPEECH If you don't understand what to do, ask for help.
2. Don't use the torch without eye protection.	ABNORMALLY LOUD VOICE	NORMAL TONE OF VOICE Don't use the torch without eye protection.
3. It'll blow like a firecracker on the 4th of July.	SLANG/IDIOMS	COMMON VOCABULARY
4. You takee hammer. Tool room. You go tool room. Give hammer man.	PIDGIN	SIMPLE GRAMMATICAL ENGLISH Take the hammer to the tool room. Give it to the man.
5. Turn this switch on before you start. Do you understand?	YES/NO QUESTIONS	CONTENT QUESTIONS Turn this switch on before you start. What do you do before you start?

OVERHEAD #2

OUT #1 Questionnaire

NAME: (optional) _____ 2. SUBJECT: _____

Number of students in your class(es): _____

How many are Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students? _____

Rank the students according to how much difficulty you have with communication, from 1-6.
Most difficult = 1 least difficult = 6

____ Spanish-speaking	____ Lao Hmong	____ Cambodian
____ Vietnamese	____ Laotion	____ Other (specify) _____

Does the presence of LEP students affect the way you teach class? _____

Indicate how often you use these methods for communicating with LEP students.
3 = almost always 2 = often 1 = seldom 0 = never

____ I use bilingual aides.
____ I speak differently. (please comment) _____
_____
____ I use easier handouts and materials.
____ I don't use books.
____ I don't lecture.
____ I repeat myself.
____ I have the students help each other more (translating).
____ I don't understand them.
____ They don't understand me.

How do you feel about the presence of LEP students in your class?

____ They don't affect my feelings about the class.
____ They make my job more difficult, but I don't mind.
____ They make my job more difficult, and I resent it.
____ I enjoy the diversity they add to my class.

Do you feel that the presence of LEP students reduces the effectiveness of your class? _____ If yes, how?

____ I cover less material than I'd like to.
____ My students take longer to complete the class.
____ Fewer students are getting jobs after completing the class.
____ Other: _____

questions 10-11, use the following scale.
1 = very successful 2 3 = satisfactory 4 5 = seriously deficient

How well do the English-speaking students:

a. Learn the skill	1	2	3	4	5
b. learn the vocabulary	1	2	3	4	5
c. get jobs after completing the class	1	2	3	4	5

How well do the LEP students:

a. learn the skill	1	2	3	4	5
b. learn the vocabulary	1	2	3	4	5
c. get jobs after completing the class	1	2	3	4	5

Are there other ways the LEP students affect your class? Please comment.

Handout #2 Southeast Asian Social and Cultural Customs

There is no single Indochinese culture. Some indication of the diversity is given in the fact that there are over twenty languages spoken within the borders of Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. There are many similarities in the traditions and customs as might be expected in a region that has been a crossroads for religions, traders and armies over much of recorded history. Contrasts have been noted. Class and individual differences affect any person's life experience, and no individual can be expected to observe every cultural norm discussed here. A general distinction may be made between the urbanized, lowland areas of Southeast Asia and the more tradition-bound upland areas.

1. Names are written in this order: Family name/ Middle name/ Given name
   Vietnamese: Nguyen Van Hai
   Cambodian: Chan Sa Mol
   Hmong: Lor Tong Khu

   Names are written in this order: Given name/ Family name
   Lao: Thonedy Sourivong

   Vietnamese & Hmong: Legally, women keep their own names after marriage. Formally, married women use their husband's name.

   Cambodian & Lao: After marriage a woman officially uses her husband's last name.

2. Marriage:
   Vietnamese: Before 1959 Vietnamese men could have more than one wife.
   Cambodian: Can have several wives, but written consent of the first wife is necessary.
   Hmong: Can have several wives and don't need to have the consent of the first wife. Only the first wife is formally married.
   Lao: Before 1945 men could have more than one wife.

(Please note that in coming to the United States, only one spouse may remain married to the husband.)

3. Family Life:
   a) Up to three or four generations live together in one home.
   b) The wife deals with all household matters. The husband deals with the outside world.
   c) Parents are proud of having a large family.
   d) Elderly parents are supported by their children until they die.
   e) Sons are valued more than daughters.

4. Society: There are traditional caste systems.

Vietnamese	Cambodian & Lao	Hmong
1. Scholar	1. King	1. City Mayor
2. Farmer/ Fisherman	2. Monk	2. Field Deputy
3. Laborer	3. Administrator	3. Leader of 60-100 villages
4. Businessman	4. Technician	4. Village leader
	5. Businessman	5. Village leader's secretary
	6. Farmer/ Laborer	6. Spirit Doctor
		7. Farmer

Society (cont.)

a) Teachers are highly respected.
b) To show respect, they bow their hands in front of a superior or an elderly person.
c) While talking, they should not look steadily at respected people's eyes.
d) Women do not shake hands with each other or with men. (It has become acceptable in the U.S.)
e) Ladies should not smoke in public.
f) Calling with a finger up is used only toward an animal or an inferior. Between two equal people, it is a provocation. To call a person, use the whole hand with the fingers facing down.
g) They never touch another person's head. Only the elderly or the parents can touch the head of young children.
h) Persons of the same sex may hold hands in public, sleep in the same bed, and are not considered homosexuals.
i) Time is flexible. There is no need to be in a hurry or punctual except in extremely important cases.

5. Religion:

Vietnamese: About 90% of the population practice ancestor worship or a loose form of Buddhism. Animism is also popular.

Cambodian & Lao: 99% of the population are followers of Buddha

Hmong: From 1956 on, Missionaries brought Protestantism of the Hmong. About half of the population are now Christians. The other half practice ancestor worship.

6. Work:

a) Usually work for a company for life.
b) More informal atmosphere among employees and between employer and employees.
c) There are no time clocks. It's OK if a worker comes 10-15 minutes late.
d) Work 8 hours daily, 6 days a week. Have 2 hour midday break.

This information was obtained from The Journal of Refugee Resettlement (Volume I, Number One), December 1980 and from refugee informants.

THINGS TO AVOID

1. If you don't understand what you are supposed to do, be sure to ask somebody to give you a hand.
2. Don't use the torch without eye protection.
3. It'll blow like firecrackers on the 4th of July
4. You takee hammer. Tool room. You go tool room. Give hammer man.
5. Turn this switch on before you start. Do you understand?

VIDEOTAPE TRANSCRIPTION (104 words)

The drill press is a simple machine that is often taken for granted. It's best to clamp a small work piece to the table, or put it in a small vise, and then clamp or secure the vise to the drill table, or position it against the drill so that it can't turn. Decrease the pressure as you feel the drill penetrate the stock. The grinder, when using it, should always use goggles or face shield. On the grinder, the tool rest should be as close as possible to the wheel without touching it. Remember to obtain permission from your instructor for all set-ups.

WRITTEN MATERIAL (103 words)

Welding and cutting operations shall be conducted only in locations that have been especially laid out and designated for the purpose, or in other locations that have been freed of fire hazards by removal or protection of combustible materials, or by removal of flammable or explosive materials, liquids, or vapors, and by taking suitable precautions against the reaccumulation of such materials. Workers or other persons adjacent to the areas in which welding is carried on should be adequately protected from the rays of the arc by screens, goggles, or other suitable means in order to prevent ultra-violet radiation burns in the eyes.

INSTRUCTIONAL TASK ASSIGNMENT

Teach your group how to fix scrambled eggs.

Teach your group how to fix a dripping faucet.

Teach your group how to change a tire.

Teach your group how to use a tape recorder.

Teach your group how to use a checking account.

Teach your group how to drive a car.

Cut this into six slips of paper and give each participant a slip.
No two participants in one group should have the same task.

THE NEW IMMIGRANTS

INSTITUTE FOR LEISURE BEHAVIOR

DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION

SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

FEBRUARY 1981

HISTORY

The Vietnamese are believed to have originated in North China, from where they were slowly driven southward by the Chinese. By the third century B.C., the Vietnamese had become settled in the Red River Delta (North Vietnam today). China annexed the region in the second century B.C. and ruled it until 938 A.D., when independence was established by Ngô Quyên. From that time until the French Domination in 1883, a result of European territorializing in southeast Asia, the Vietnamese constantly fought off the Chinese invaders and at the same time expanded their border southward, occupying the Cham (Chiêm Thanh) territory (central Vietnam today), and half of Cambodia (south Vietnam today).

Important Historical Dates

2879-207 B.C.	The building of a nation with Hông Bàng and Thua dynasties
207 B.C.-936 A.D.	Under Chinese Domination
937-1883	Independent Period
1883-1945	Under French Domination
1945-1948	Democratic Republic of Vietnam (Coalition government)
1948-1954	Civil War (Nationalist vs Communist)
1954-1975	The Two Vietnams
1975-	Democratic Republic of Vietnam (Communist)

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ART

Vietnam is famous for its lacquer and pottery. Mother-of pearl is usually encrusted in the lacquer. Subjects for lacquer and pottery works are generally taken from history, legend, or the four seasons. Vietnam also has painting and sculpture, in which blends of Orient and Occident, ancient and modern can be seen.

FOOD

As in most of Asia, rice rather than bread is the main staple. Vegetables and fish are eaten more than meat. Vietnamese food preparation is similar to Chinese - frying, steaming, and braising, vegetables cooked with meat - except that the Vietnamese use far less fat. Traditionally the Vietnamese have prepared elaborate meals. Little wonder that the housewife had to spend her whole day at home - just to prepare three meals for the family! A meal usually consists of three main dishes: soup, a salty dish of fish or meat, and a main course consisting of a vegetable cooked with fish or meat. Food is served in bowls and eaten with chopsticks. Typical Vietnamese foods are chả giò (a kind of eggroll), bì (chopped fried pork, chopped pork skin mixed with roasted rice flour), and mắm (pickled fish).

RELIGION

Buddhism is the major religion in Vietnam. Its teachings include practicing moderation in all things, reincarnation, and ancestor worship. Catholicism is the second largest religion, introduced by missionaries. Its social impact is not as great as that of the Oriental religions, perhaps because it does not fit so well with the culture.

Taoism and Confucianism are considered more as schools of thought than religions. Their influence is strongly felt. Taoism stresses harmony between man and nature, and between man and man. Confucianism is an ethical system governing conduct. Traditionally in Confucianism, men are expected to have such virtues as humaneness and intellect, while women are to be attractive, submissive, diligent housekeepers, and to keep quiet. (In actuality, women have a strong voice in family matters, though they defer to their husbands in public, if they appear at all. Today the balance between men and women is beginning to shift to a more complementary one.)

Another religion is Cao Daism. This involves the worship of many important persons, not necessarily divine, such as Jesus, Buddha, and significant contributors to society like, for example, Victor Hugo.

SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

In Vietnam the basic social unit is the family - the extended family, including not only parents and children but also grandparents and sometimes unmarried aunts and uncles. Social life tends to be focused on the family. While clubs and organizations exist in Vietnam, they are more limited in size and numbers, with membership restricted to those of the same profession or social class.

While Americans are among the most informal of the world's peoples in social relationships, the Vietnamese, in common with most Orientals, preserve a formal decorum in their interactions. Harmony is the keynote. Open opposition is rare. Disagreement is far more likely to be expressed by posing alternative suggestions than by direct contradiction. Similarly, answers to questions are apt to be prefaced with "yes," whether the reply is actually affirmative or negative.

However, while harmonious relationships are thus preserved, (and add a tone of graciousness to social contact), feelings for one another amongst Vietnamese tend not to go very deep, outside the family and close friends (family loyalties are very strong). Group cooperation on any more extended basis tends to be tenuous. The Vietnamese may themselves explain this on the basis of being introverted and each feeling himself the center of his own world. Yet group feeling at the family level is highly operative; social needs are met at this level also.

One might also speculate that the tradition of formal courtesy itself could conceivably present a barrier to more indepth relationships by discouraging a more meaningful exchange of feelings than courtesy allows.

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VIETNAMESE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Early Childhood - There are day care centers and kindergartens, mostly private and not universally attended.

Elementary School consists of 5 grades, from 1-5 and is compulsory.

Junior High School (Trung hoc dê I cấp) consists of 4 grades, 6-9. The curriculum is somewhat similar to American junior high except that the student is required to take one foreign language, either French or English.

Senior High School (Trung hoc dê II cấp) consists of 3 grades, 10-12. Again the curriculum is somewhat similar to American senior high school except that a student is required to continue in either French or English, and must choose another language from among the following: English, French, Spanish, German, Chinese, or Japanese. A student must also choose one of four possible sections as an area of concentration: Applied Science, Pure Science and Math, Modern Literature, or Ancient Literature. A baccalaureate degree is conferred at completion.

College and Universities Vietnam has 4 universities: Saigon, Dalat, Can Tho, Hue, and 3 community colleges: Duyen Hai (Nhatrang), Quang Da (Danang), Tien Giang (Mytho). Some are under government auspices and some are private. The Universities grant degrees of Cu nhan (Bachelor), Cao hoc (Master), and Tien Si (Ph.D.). Community Colleges grant a certificate of 2 years study. Graduate studies are pursued independently; students are not required to attend class, but submit a thesis at the conclusion of their studies.

Educational Attitudes and Customs With Reference to Adjustment of Vietnamese Students in American Schools

Not only has learning traditionally been highly respected in Vietnam, it has provided a means of upward mobility. The Vietnamese have not had a landed aristocracy, and officials were chosen from the educated - a status accessible to all. However, prior to the end of World War II and Vietnamese independence, less than 1% of the population was educated. In that same post-war period, Vietnamese became the offical language of instruction, replacing French and English.

Education tends to follow regid academic lines, thus bearing a stronger resemblance to European schools than American. Examinations are given each year to qualify students for the next grade, and students must pass entrance exams to enter high school, as well as university. The drop out rate is nigh.

In the classroom the teacher is the respected authority; students do as they are told. Lessons are often dictated by the teachers and

memorized by the student. In consequence, American schools may present something of a culture shock to Vietnamese children, with the current emphasis on open classrooms and encouraging initiative. They are apt to need direction and structure in making the transition. They also have not been accustomed to ask questions or state freely that they do not understand, when this is the case.

In Vietnam when a student is reprimanded by a teacher, he is expected to listen with lowered head and eyes. To look the teacher in the eye when being corrected is to challenge the teacher and is considered disrespectful. This is apt to be misunderstood by U.S. teachers who expect and desire eye contact when talking to a student. Also, while in the U.S. crooking a finger at someone simply means "come here," in Vietnam it has a belligerent connotation; "come here" is expressed by waving all fingers.

Other differing educational customs include: in high school teachers change classes in Vietnam, not students, where co-education exists, the sexes are separated, and teaming of boys and girls will feel uncomfortable; changing for gym and showering are not done in Vietnam and may feel immodest; sex education is considered private and personal and should be handled delicately, if at all.

With regard to the second language studied from 6th grade on, emphasis is on the written language, rather than spoken, so written mastery is apt to be stronger than conversation.

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VIETNAMESE NAMES

The Vietnamese have usually three, and sometimes four, names ordered on the pattern: family name, middle name, and familiar (our "first") name (eg., Doan Toan Phuc, ie. Phuc of the family Doan). To conform to American habits and needs the refugee may have already reversed the order (eg. Phuc Toan Doan, in the example previous), so if you have any doubt, don't be afraid to ask. At times individuals may be known among family and friends by both middle and familiar names (eg., Minh Duc, Americanized as "Mindy"), but it is not improper to refer to these individuals by the familiar name only.

Pronunciation is occasionally difficult, but generous approximations usually suffice. The sound most Americans have trouble with is "ng-", something alien to our tongue, but not that hard once you get used to it. One way to practice the sound is by pronouncing the English word sing and hold on to the final sound. Then, start adding a second syllable to it (eg., sing-ngō). Finally, say the ng- with the desired seond syllable, without using sing. There, that wasn't so bad was it?

Common Family Names and Approximate Pronunciations

Nguyen (Wen)	Pham (Fahm)	Do (Doh)
Ngo (Ngoh)	Phan (Fahn)	Cao (Kow)
Tran (Trun)	Ho (Hoh)	Pho (Faw)
Le (Lay)	Dinh (Ding)	Luu (Lou)
Doan (Dwon)	Ly (Lee)	Vu (Voo)

Some Common Familiar Names and Approximate Pronunciations

Binh (Bing)	Hong (Honng)	San (Sun)
Cung (Koong)	Hien (Hyen)	Tam (Tum)
Chieu (Chew)	Hai (Hi)	Tan (Tun)
Cuc (Kook)	Loc (Lope)	Tuyet (Twet)
Duc (Dook)	Minh (Ming)	Tho (Taw)
Dao (Dow)	Mai (My)	Thanh (Tihng or Tan)
Hoa (Hwah)	Ngoc (Ngawp)	Truc (Trook)
Hue (Hway)	Phuc (Fook)	Vinh (Ving)
Huong (Hoong)	Sang (Sahng)	Xuyen (Swen)

note: -ih- here refers to th long i sound as in sign.

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LAO NAMES

Lao names follow the order Americans are familiar with: first names followed by family name. The given name quite often falls into two parts, a common prefix followed by any of a number of common suffices (Eg., Khamsy, Khamsay, Khamphanh, Thongphanh, Thongphoun). Close friends may skip the prefix and simply call each other by Sy, Say, Phanh, etc., but formally they retain the first syllable. Three prefices are: Kham- (pronounced Khahm, where the Kh- sounds something like the initial letter of the Jewish work Hanuka), Thong (Tawng) and Boun (Bwone). Below are some common suffices to give you an idea of the pronunciation:

-sy (see)	-pheng (pang)	-bang (bahng)
-say (sih)	-phone (pawn)	-bang (bung)
-sone (sawn)	-phanh (pahn)	-bone (bawn)
-souk (sook)	-phoun (poon)	
	-phouang (pwung)	-my (mee)
-dang (dang)		-ma (ma)
		-manh (mahn)

Family names are generally varied and all I can do here is give you a few sample names to help you understand a little of the pronunciation process:

Baravong (Bah-rah-vong)

Soukbandith (Sook-bahn-dith)

Vongkhamkeaw (Vong-kham-keo)

Vongsawat (Vong-sa-waht)

If you've had to deal with Weijneski's, Haluska's and Zemlak's all your life, you may not find these too challenging.

note: -ih- refers here to the long i sound, as in sign.

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LAO-H'MONG NAMES

The H'mong may have either two or three names, depending on their age and family status. All have a given name and a clan name, the order they are given being either: first name followed by clan name or vice versa, depending on which sounds better to the ear. One's children may be referred to as "Tou" (son) or "Mow" (or "May" which means daughter) plus the child's name. A married man with up to three children may have a third name bestowed on him by his father-in-law in a special celebration (eg., Xia Chang becomes Cha Xia Chang). Women retain their maiden names after marriage as evidence of their extra-clan descendency, but in very polite circumstances they may be referred to as "Mrs. so-and-so" using the husband's name. Some examples of H'mong clan and given names are given below:

Clan Names

Chang (chahng)
Fang (fahng)
Hang (hahng)
Khang (khahng)
Moua (moo-ah)
Lee, Ly, or Le (lee)
Yang (yahng)
Vang (vahng)
Lor or Lo (Law)
Vue (voo)
Xiong (shee-ohng)
Thao or Thor (taw)

Given Names

Cheng (cheng)
Sao (sow)
Neng (neng)
Ge (zhay)
Pao (pow)
Bee (bee)
Chue (chew)
Thong (tawng)
Tou (too)
Ger or Yeu (dzur)
Dang (dahng)
Sy or See (see)
Koua or Kua (koo-ah)
Doua or Dua (doo-ah)
Blia (blee-ah)
Chia (chee-ah)
You (jew)
Yii (yee)
Neng (neng)
Lang (lahng)
Lia (lee-ah)
Le (lee)
Nu (noo)
Mo (maw)
Kia (kee-ah)
Geu (tsah)
May (my)
Hua (hoo-ah)

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CAMBODIAN NAMES

The Khmer usually have only two names given in the order: family name followed by given name (eg., Chap Kung, Chap is the family name and Kung the given). Traditionally the family name is in fact the given name of one's father or grandfather, causing the name to change with successive generations. This, however, is changing with the Cambodians' arrival here. Likewise, the two names may be given in "Western order", ie. first name followed by family name, in conformity with our custom, so it may be necessary for you to ask the individual for clarification. Adults may be addressed as "Mr." or "Mrs." and the given, not family, name (eg. Mr. Kung, in the instance above), however these titles are usually used only in very polite circumstances. Below are some examples of family and given names with their corresponding pronunciation:

Family Names

Sovann (soh-vahn)
Sok (sawk)
San (sahn)
Touch (too-ee)
Som (sawm)
Sambo (sahm-boh)
Vuthy (voo-tee)
Sem (sem)
Chak (chawk)
Chep (chop)

Given Names

Cheata (chee-ay-tah)
Dara (dah-rah)
Serey (say-ray)
Narong (nah-rong)
Chea (chee-ah)
Samlei (sahm-lee)
Sambath (sahm-baht)
Leng (leng)
Loeung (loong)
Naroeung (nah-roong)
Saroeung (sah-roong)
Phuong (poong)
Balin (bah-lin)
Son (sawn)
Chheng (cheng)
Ly (lee)

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I AM REFUGEE

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